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THE
AMOROUS MERCHANT:
OR,
INTRIGUING HUSBAND.
BEING,
A Curious and Uncommon Process
OF
LOVE and LAW.

WHEREIN

The Inconveniencies of an OLD SICKLY WIFE,
and the alluring Charms of YOUTH and
BEAUTY, are pleasantly contrasted.

A CASE, founded on INCONTESTIBLE FACTS,
often litigated in our High Courts of Justice;
and, for some Years past, the Subject of Conver-
sation among the Gay and Polite.

Quid non improbus Amor?

Written by Mrs. GRAHAM, now BARRY, in the
Manner of ~~CONSTANTIA~~ PHILLIPS.

L O N D O N:

Printed for and Sold by Mrs. BARRY, in *Prujeancourt*, in the *Old-baily*; where may be seen at full Length the original Pictures, together with the Love-Letters, Bonds, &c. MDCCCLIII.

The Story of this Pamphlet
was told by Mr Barry, and
written, & digested & compiled
by John Merchant

a true Story. This Pamphlet
was never published, the Merchant
whom it concerned, having
bought up the whole Impression.

LOVE AND LAW

BY JOHN MERCHANT

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A CASUALTY OF LOVE
A HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF
THE HEARTS OF WOMEN
BY THE MEN OF THE WORLD

BY JOHN MERCHANT

WRITTEN BY MR. G. R. M. B. W. B.
MEMPHIS OF CONSTANTIA, TUNISIA

XIV. O N D O V I :

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOVE AND LAW"
AND THE "HISTORICAL CHRONICLE"
AND THE "HISTORICAL CHRONICLE"
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THE AMOROUS MERCHANT;
OR,
Intriguing Husband.

TH E Passion of Love is multiplied into such a Variety of Forms, and its Votaries divided into so many Classes; its Effects are so strange, and of so different a Complexion, in either of the Sexes, that a Man must be as great an Adept in this *mysterious Science*, even as *Ovid* himself; that is, he must make it the whole Study and Practice of his Life, to be able to treat of it in an intelligible Manner. Love triumphs over Rule and Reason, and sets at Defiance the Wisdom of the Philosopher, the Courage of the Hero, the Artifice of the Statesman, the Avarice of the Miser, and the Devotion of the Hermit. Nor Youth nor Age can plead Exemption from the Jurisdiction of the little Deity; and wherever he erects his Standard, he expects a passive and unlimited Obedience. Whoever resisted his Power, but became the Victim of his Resentment, and the living Monument of his own Folly? He governs his Subjects with a more absolute Despotism,

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Despotism, than the *Grand Turk* the Slaves whose Lives are dependant on his Will. To attempt to demonstrate this by Arguments, wou'd be as useless as to offer Proofs that the Sun shines at his meridian Height ; and to illustrate every Branch of my Subject by Instances, would be to write the History of all Mankind. I shall therefore confine myself to one Example, and a particular Species of this domineering Passion, as surprizing in the Events it produc'd, as the Methods by which it was managed and carried on, were extraordinary.

MR. Churchman is a Merchant in the *Italian Trade*; a Gentleman of unexceptionable Character in his Dealings, punctual in his Payments, and whose Word, upon Change, would be taken for more than he was worth. Nor was his Reputation Abroad in less Esteem; every Man, who traded in the Commodities he dealt in, was proud of receiving his Orders, because he was assured his Correspondent was a Man of the strictest Honour, and that his Remittances, whether by Bills or Merchandise, would be exactly agreeable to the Rules of fair Trade.

THUS stood Mr. Churchman in his publick Character as a Merchant; and if we consider him as a private Gentleman, all who have the Happiness to be in the Circle of his Friends, or in the Number of his Acquaintance, know him to be a Gentleman of fine Sense, extensive Knowledge as well in commercial as civil Life, affable, communicative, generous, and humane.

As to his Person, he is moderately tall, well shaped, neither bulky nor slender, but preserving a due Mean between both, his Limbs finely proportioned

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portioned, with an exact Symmetry in his Features, of a ruddy Complexion, and a piercing Eye: In short, his Form is in all Respects so compleat, that it would be difficult for the most discerning Eye to discover an Imperfection in his whole Frame.

IN his natural Disposition he is amorous, and his Passions apt to take Fire at the Sight of any beautiful Object; and as he possessed so many Excellencies in himself, both of Body and Mind, it's no Wonder that the Ladies were always fond of his Company, and that few of them could deny any Favour that could be ask'd by a Gentleman so perfectly accomplish'd.

BUT tho' Nature had form'd him for the Delight and Pleasure of the Fair Sex, Fate had put a Bar upon his Inclination, and prevented his corresponding with them on any other Terms than such as Honour permits. In short, *he was married*; and though under that Covert he might take greater Freedoms than would be allowed to others not so circumstanced, because such Gallantries would only be interpreted as proceeding from the Gaiety of his Heart and Complaisance to the Ladies; yet he found himself restrained from being particular in his Addresses to any one, at least in Publick, which, he knew, must be attended with Scandal as well to the fair Object of his kind Regards, as to himself; and therefore he was under a Necessity of managing his amorous Intrigues with the utmost Privacy. For, though he was willing to indulge himself in the delightful Scenes of Love and Gallantry, yet such was his Concern for his Reputation, that he would not, if possible, suffer it to be stain'd with the least Blemish.

THIS

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THIS is the just Portrait of Mr. *Churchman*, as near to the Life as I could draw it; which, if the Reader bears in Mind, will be a Clue to lead him through all the Intricacies and Meanders of the following Narrative. And as we have dwelt pretty long upon the Character of the Hero, it will be expected that we do equal Justice to that of the Heroine of our Story.

IN the Year 1742, the Time when Mr. *Churchman* became acquainted with *Melinda*, she was a Widow, the Relict of a Gentleman with whom she had lived in all Conjugal Felicity for about three Years. At his Decease, she found herself in Possession, not indeed of a very large Fortune, yet of a Competency, which, with a prudent Oeconomy, was sufficient to support her. But though Fortune was not over liberal in her pecuniary Gifts, yet Providence made a rich Amends for this Deficiency, by laying her in a valuable Stock of Youth and Beauty, which, if wisely improved, might be made a noble Fund of Happiness for Life.

MELINDA was then in the Bloom of Youth, and the Charms of her Person were so engaging that it was impossible to view her with Indifference. Her Skin was as fair as the new-fallen Snow, her Eyes hazel and sparkling, and every Feature of her Face fine and regular, free and easy in her Shape and Gait, and all the Lineaments of her Form seemed almost without Exception.

BUT besides these external Perfections, which Time will impair, and at length totally destroy, those of her Mind were more excellent, as they are not subject to the Depredations of Time or Accident.

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Accident. Her Wit always made her Company agreeable, as her Vivacity gave a Spirit to her Conversation. Good Nature instructed her not to be too censorious of others; and her Knowledge of the Infirmities of her own Sex, taught her Pity and Compassion to those unhappy Females, who, by the deceitful Arts of Men, had been deluded to their Ruin. Gay in her Temper, free and easy in her Behaviour, and circumspective in her Conduct, she was no less admired by the Men than care'd by the Women.

HITHERTO Mr. Churhman and Melinda were absolute Strangers; but soe Time in the Year 1742, it was his Fortune to fall into the Company of some Ladies where Melinda was on a Visit in Cleveland-Court. The Charms of her Person, the Sprightliness of her Wit, and the Gaiety of her Humour, soon engaged his Attention; he was instantly, what Milton says of the Angelic Spirits, *All Eye, all Ear, all Intellect, all Sense*; and this lovely Object had taken such full Possession of all his Senses, and his Soul was so wholly wrapt up in the Contemplation of her Charms, that from that Moment he resolved that her Beauty alone should for the future be the Pole Star of his Love.

MELINDA was not insensible of her Conquest, and perhaps not a little pleased to see so fine a Gentleman at her Devotion. But as he could not at that Time express his Passion more explicitly than by Looks, Sighs, and other dumb Tokens, all perfectly intelligible in the Language of Love, he resolv'd to leave nothing unattempted that might recommend him to her kind Regard.

IT happen'd to be a very rainy Night, so that when

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when the Company broke up, Melinda took a Chair to carry her to her House in Ebuntain Court in the Strand. Mr. Churchman moved away at the same Time, and followed her Chair till she was set down at her own Door; which being opened by her Servant, he followed her into the House, Adropping wet with the Rain. Melinda, not a little surprized to see the same Person she had just parted from, again in her Presence in such an odd Blight, half drown'd with the Fall of the Spouts, desired to know what he meant by this Intrusion? As Love had brought him thither, Love soon furnished him with Reasons to pacify the Lady's Anger, and procure him a farther Admission. He acknowledged he had introduced himself very abruptly, but hoped the Necessity he was under of sheltering himself from the Weather, would apologize for any Disrespect he might be guilty of. He was persuaded, he said, that a Lady, who had given him so much Pleasure by her Conversation a little before, would not now in this Distress, refuse him the Protection of her House. Melinda scarce knew what to make of this odd Adventure; but as Mr. Churchman's Behaviour was extremely polite, and his personable Appearance and respectful Address bespoke him a Gentleman, she had too much good Nature to deny him so small a Favour. But to prevent any ill Consequences, she sent for a Lady, who was usually her Bedfellow, to hasten home, to relieve her from the Perplexity she was under from the Behaviour of a strange Gentleman who was then with her.

Whether

WHETHER Mr. Churchman, from this Condescension in *Melinda*, perceived that he was not wholly indifferent to her, or from a Consciousness of the Graces of his own Person, which never fail'd to recommend him to the Fair Sex, or from the Resolution with which Love had inspired him, he would not miss so fair an Opportunity of declaring the Passion that had taken such a strong Possession of his Heart, that he found his Fate was wholly in her Power, and that his Life or Death depended on the Sentence she should pronounce upon him. However, he could not persuade himself, that so much Beauty and Goodness, so apparently united in her Person, could harbour so much Cruelty as to drive him to the Extremities of Despair.

To this sudden, and, in a Manner, unexpected Declaration, her Answer was to this Effect ; That their Acquaintance was of so short a Date, that she had all the Reason in the World to believe, that either he was not in Earnest, and that this was no more than a little Gallantry, with which he had used to entertain the Ladies ; or else that his Designs were not honourable. That she was too well acquainted with her own Imperfections to imagine, that what he was pleased to call her Beauty, was capable of inspiring him with that Tenderness he seemed so full of. That so many Women had been undone by the Flatteries and Falsities of the Men, that she was determined to act with the utmost Caution and Circumspection in an Affair that so nearly concerned her Happiness. That as she was an utter Stranger to his Person and Circumstances, she must have more convincing Proofs of his Sincerity.

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rity, and of his Capacity to make her happy than she had yet seen. That Love (commonly so called) was altogether the Creature of Fancy, and as the Fancy varies with every successive Object that entertains it, so does the Love, which is under its sole Direction. That Truth and Constancy are so much the very Essentials of real Love, that it is impossible it should exist without these necessary Qualities, which it can never be known to have till proved by long Experience and repeated Trials. And, in short, that tho' at present he might see something in her Person which pleased his Fancy, yet, upon a longer Acquaintance, it was highly probable, he would discover so many Faults and Imperfections in her, that he would even curse his own Blindness and Indiscretion, that did not suffer him to discern them before. And therefore, that she should be guilty of the most unpardonable Imprudence, should she give Credit to Professions, which might have nothing more for their Foundation than a Flight of Fancy, which is of no longer Duration than till the next agreeable Object present itself.

MR. *Churchman* duly weighing every Word she spoke, could not perceive any Thing in her Answer that should discourage him from urging his Suit; but thought it proper to take another Opportunity to explain himself more at large; and therefore only made this short Reply, 'That it was very true, that the Ladies had been great Sufferers by putting too much Confidence in the Professions of their pretended Admirers; that therefore she could not be too much on her Guard, nor examine too strictly into the Characters and Pretensions of her Suitors; that as to his own part,

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part, if he did not make it appear, to her own Satisfaction, that he was capable of making her happy, even to the utmost Extent of her Wishes, he would forsake all Pretences to her Favours, and immediately desist from troubling her any more with his Impertinencies. But if he should be able to convince her (as he did not in the least doubt but he should) that he was in a Capacity to place her in a Situation above the Reach of Envy; and that there was nothing within the Compass of her Ambition, but what was in his Power to provide for her, he had so much Confidence in her Generosity, that he persuaded himself she would not make him miserable by refusing the Tenders of his unfeigned Love; and desired she would give no farther Credit to his Words, than his Actions should be a Proof of his Sincerity: And begged that she would suspend her Resolution till their next Interview, which he entreated might be the next Evening, when he would clear up every Doubt, and give her such Demonstrations of his Truth and Sincerity, that, he hoped, would dissipate all her Fears and Jealousies of his sinister Designs. Having so said, rising from his Seat, he gently pressed her Lips, and, with a Fondness in his Eyes that spoke the Ardour of his Passion, more expressively than a thousand Protestations could do, he took his Leave.

MELINDA soon afterwards retired to her Chamber to ruminate on this strange Adventure. A Multitude of Thoughts came crowding into her Mind. She could not conceive who this Gentleman should be; yet by his Figure, Dress, and polite Behaviour, she judged

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he was of some Quality superior to the common Rank ; and, if so, that his Courtship would not proceed upon honourable Terms. But, said she again to herself, why should I distrust the Power of my Charms ? Are there not many Instances to be produced of Men of Fortune and in high Life, who have fallen in Love with Beauties in an humble Station ? And who knows but my Lover may be some illustrious Member in our National Assembly ? Or perhaps he is some Favourite at Court, who, having taken a Distaste to the sickly Beauties to which his Eyes have been constantly used, has resolved to vary the Scene, and please his Fancy in lower Life. Thus, between the Hopes of enlarging her Happiness, and the Fear of being deceived to her Ruin, she spent the Night, *And found no End, in wandering Mazes lost.*

PUNCTUALITY is the very Life and Soul of Credit, and the most invaluable Ingredient in the Character of a Merchant, nor is it less esteemable in a Lover ; Mr. Churchman was both, and therefore under a double Obligation to be exact to his Appointments ; and we may be sure he did not fail in the first he made to this Lady. He waited on her the next Evening as he had promised ; she received him indeed with an affected Air of Indifference and Unconcern, yet her Spirits were all in a Flutter ; Hope and Dread alternately possessed her Mind ; and Curiosity, which had been long on the Stretch, and given her unexpressible Uneasiness, expects to be relieved by the Disclosure of this important Scene. Mr. Churchman does not keep her long in Suspence ; but with all the Ardour the Violence of

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his Passion had inspired him with, he pours out his Soul in Vows of everlasting Love and Constancy protests that the Needle shall sooner deviate from its Inclination to the Pole, the glorious Luminaries of the Heavens start from their Orbs, and Nature be changed from its stated Course, e'er Falsity or Insincerity should be blended with the Purity of his Professions and the Uprightness of his Intentions. That he laid himself, and his whole Fortune, which was not inconsiderable, at her Feet, and only begged that she would condescend so far, as to think them worth her Acceptance, at least not to reject them with Contempt ; for her Scorn was the greatest Evil he dreaded, as her favourable Regard was a Happiness he esteemed preferable to the greatest Felicity this World can afford. That her Charms had made such an indelible Impression on his Soul, that nothing but Death could efface. Entreated, that she would not oblige him to drink off the black and deadly Draught of Despair, when it was in her Power to give him Life and Spirit with a single Drop of her rich Cordial of Hope, which it would be a most meritorious Act of Charity to dispense to one who must be ever miserable without it.

MELINDA gave great Attention to this laboured Harangue ; but as she was no Novice in the Affairs of Love, and knew how ready our modern Gallants are at such kind of Speeches, when at the same Time they secretly meditate the worst of Mischiefs to the Fair Ones who are credulous enough to believe them, answered him to this Effect : I have lived long enough in the World to know, said she, that but little Credit

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is to be given to the Protestations of Men ; like Cowards, they attack us in a Part where they know we are capable of making the least Defence ; they imagine that Vanity is our prevailing Passion, and there they play their strongest Battery ; when they have the most pernicious Designs against our Peace and Happiness, they endeavour to dose us with their Opiates of Flattery, that so we may not be sensible of our Ruin till we are involved in it past Recovery ; if we are tolerably handsome we are immediately transformed into Goddesses ; and if we have Wit enough to make us a little pert, what Wonder and Astonishment does it raise in our wise Admirers ! But certainly you pay but a very indifferent Compliment to our Understandings if you imagine us capable of digesting such gross Absurdities. I must own indeed that your Success is but too plain an Argument of the Justness of your Opinion, though it can never be a Justification of your Practice. But, after all, what are the mighty Conquests you so much boast of ? Are they, in general, worthy that Superiority of Sense and Reason you value yourselves so much upon ? Are Infancy and Inexperience, thoughtless Innocence and unguarded Virtue, the fittest Objects for the Display of your surprizing Talents in Stratagem and Deceit ? For it is on this weak and indefensive Part of our Sex that your Wiles are employed, and against which the Force of your Artillery is directed. But how seldom do you triumph when Experience guards the Fortress, and Maturity of Judgment stands Centinel to watch your Approaches ? When Virtue strictly examines your Pretensions, and Honour

is

is vigilant to give Notice of your Designs? One who has been already married, which indeed is my Case, knows, that there are other Ingredients required to make up the Happiness of a Woman, besides the Love of a Man, be it ever so sincere and well attested. Your Eloquence therefore is lost on one who can distinguish between Words and Actions; let your Bait be ever so finely gilded, I hope I shall have Penetration enough to discern the Hook prepared for my Destruction.

MADAM, said he, I am perfectly convinced of the Truth of all you have said; Men are too apt to take Advantages of the Foibles and Inadvertencies of the Fair Sex, which I must own is a very ungenerous Proceeding; I look upon such Impositions with Horror and Detestation, and such who are guilty of them as the Pests of Society. I am a Stranger to all those Arts that are disingenuous: Honour is my Profession, which I esteem a Jewel of such inestimable Value, that I hope I shall never survive the Loss of it. In me, Madam, you see a Man who never could be justly charged with falsifying his Word, and whose Word only, is reckoned, by the most opulent Merchants in *London*, as good a Security as the Bank itself, for Thousands, more than I think it necessary to mention at this Time. Not that I imagine Riches the only Qualification a Lady should require in a Lover, which instead of complimenting her Understanding, one could say nothing worse to degrade it; but to satisfy my Charmer, that, though I should be so unhappy as to be thought destitute of every other Merit, yet that Wealth,
that

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that necessary Fuel to keep Love alive when it is once kindled, is not wanting.

So saying, he threw himself at her Feet, and in the most passionate Expressions, protested he would never rise from the Place where his Knees were fixed, till by some kind Look or Word, she beam'd tho' it were the smallest Ray of Hope on his desponding Soul.

MELINDA, not in the least surprized at the Extravagance of his Behaviour, sedately told him, that his Passion was too impetuous, she feared, to be lasting; that mutual Love, which alone could create mutual Happiness, must be the Result of cool Deliberation, a Similitude of Tempers and Inclinations, and a Return of endearing Offices; that if his Professions were real, and he was that Man of Honour he had represented himself, she expected other Proofs of it than mere verbal Protestations; and till she had that Satisfaction, she desired to be excused from explaining herself any farther.

MR. *Churchman* perceiving by her Answer, that she had given him all the Encouragement he could reasonably expect, started up, and catching hold of her Hand, pressed it eagerly to his Mouth, and, with a languishing Fondness in his Eyes, assured her, that as she had condescended to point out to him the Means of his Success, he would soon give her such convincing Proofs of his Sincerity, that she should not have the least Room to call in Question either his Veracity or his Honour. After repeating his Assurances of Fidelity, and that his Life or Death depended absolutely on her Will, he took

took his Leave. The next Day she received
from him the following Letter.

DEAR LADY,

THE Moment a Man becomes a Lover,
he is, in a Manner, lost to himself, and
all the World. He has no longer the Com-
mand of his Thoughts, Words, or Actions;
Love is such an Engrosser, that he grudges
every Moment that is spent in Business, or
the Cares of the World; Concerns of the ut-
most Moment must give Place to his Intru-
sion; vain is our Attempt to drown him in
Wine, or the flowing Bowl; he emerges with
the Return of Sobriety, and attacks us with
greater Violence than ever; he laughs at our
Folly when we resolve to banish him from
our Thoughts by Sleep, for no sooner do we
close our Eyes, but the Fancy is crowded
with Ideas of the lovely Object. My Friends
always esteemed me as a cheerful and sociable
Companion; but alas, how strange is the
Reverse! For last Night, when I retired
from your dear Presence, I went to a Club
of them, Gentlemen of the same Humour
with myself, free and communicative, and
who meet together in an Evening to relax our
Minds after the Fatigues of the Day: I sat
down among them, took my Glass in Turn,
said nothing, at least nothing to the Purpose,
and the few Sentences that escaped from me,
were so broken and incoherent, that any one
might easily perceive, my Thoughts were
employed upon some Object very different

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' from any Thing then before me ; so that to
' prevent any ungrateful Questions, which I
' was sensible my odd Behaviour might oblige
' me to answer, I took an abrupt Leave, and
' went Home.

' Now, Madam, I leave you to judge, by
' this Description of my Condition, whether I
' have not all the Symptoms of Love upon
' me ; and if so, whether you do not think it
' is high Time to apply a Remedy ? It is true,
' I have not consulted any of the Faculty, from
' a certain Persuasion, that it is not in the Pow-
' er of all their Drugs to give me Relief. It is
' said, that, to have a good Opinion of the
' Doctor, is a good Step towards the Cure.
' Permit me then, fair Doctress, to apply to
' you, whom I am well assured, are not only
' perfectly acquainted with the Nature of my
' Distemper, but have an infallible Recipe, that
' will certainly restore me to myself, my Bu-
' siness, and my Friends again. Your Patient
' shall wait on you in the Evening, when (he
' is in great Hopes) you will use him with
' that Gentleness and tender Concern which his
' melancholy Condition may entitle him to :

I am,

Dear LADY,

' with the utmost Truth and Sincerity,

' Your most devoted humble Servant,

J. CHURCHMAN.

NOW

Now, will the Reader believe, that this same Mr. *Churchman*, who is so violently in Love with this Lady, who courted her upon honourable Terms, and with a View, as he assured her upon all Occasions, to make her his lawful Wife, was at that very Time a married Man, and had been so for many Years before? And can any one imagine, that he should carry on this Courtship for two Years together without a Discovery? Yet this was really the Case; and by the Method he took to keep it still a Secret, it might have remained so much longer, had not an Accident brought the Whole to Light; as will be explained hereafter.

BUT to return to our Lover, who was punctual to his Promise, and in the Evening presented himself before her, and again renewed his Vows and Solicitations, which it is needless to repeat, as the Language of Lovers has but little Variety in it after their first Declaration. Let it suffice to say, that he hardly let a Day pass, without giving her a Letter or his Company, and not unfrequently both; and this with so much Affiduity and Application, that at last *Melinda* began to entertain a Liking for him, and even to be fond of his Conversation; for both his Person and Behaviour, his Sense and Understanding were such as she could have no Exception to. Her only Demur was, that, by all her Wit and Dexterity, she could get no other Account either of his Character or Circumstances, than what he was pleased to give her. He told her indeed, that he lived at *Lewisham*, where he

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had a large real Estate, and was worth an hundred thousand Pounds in the Stocks and Funds, but not a Word of his being a Merchant, and that he carried on a large, or, indeed, any Trade into Foreign Parts. But what gave her the greatest Reason to suspect his Veracity was, his assuring her, that whenever he parted from her, though very often late at Night, he went directly to *Lewisham*, which she could not reconcile to Reason, especially when it happened in the Depth of Winter, or in dark Nights and bad Weather. To satisfy herself in a Matter, which she rightly judged was very material, after he had taken his Leave of her, very late, and in a dark and rainy night, she has often sent her Servant after him, to watch his Walks, and to observe what House he lodged himself in. This he was aware of, and concerted his Measures accordingly; for he always took into some Tavern or Publick House, that had a Passage through it into another Street, and so eluded the Pursuit. This strengthened her Suspicions, that all was not right, and that there was a Snake lurking in the Grass which might, some Time or other, sting her mortally when she was least upon her Guard. This occasioned many Quarrels and contentious Disputes between them, to that Degree, that every now and then they came to an open Rupture, and very angry Letters passed between them for several Days together. Then he would come again, and in the Condition of an humble Penitent, threw himself prostrate on the Floor, and in that Posture continue sometimes for an Hour

Hour together, earnestly supplicating her Pardon and Reconciliation, protesting, if she absolutely refused it, to die at her Feet ; yet if he happened to hear any Body coming down the Stairs, he would jump up in a Moment, and very calmly seat himself in a Chair by her.

BUT what gave her more Uneasiness and Trouble than any Thing yet mentioned, was, his jealous Humours. For, when he thought he was secure of his Conquest, he began to prescribe Rules for her Conduct and Behaviour, and would not permit her to keep any Company, if he could help it, but such as he should approve ; and when ever he found she acted contrary to his Order (of which he was sure to be informed by his Spies, who kept a strict Eye upon all her Actions) she immediately had a Letter from him full of Anger and Resentment. But as he could not be always with her himself, nor bear that any other should keep her Company, he bethought himself of an Expedient to divert her, which would not only prevent her Thoughts from wandering after other Objects, but be a pretty Amusement to employ her many leisure Hours ; this was, by giving her a Theme or Subject to write upon, which she was to throw into as many Lights as her Wit and Ingenuity could imagine. This she was to prepare against his next Visit, when his critical Examination of it made a good Part of their Conversation for that Evening.

IN this Manner was this famous Courtship carried on for the first two Years, sometimes with

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with a serene Skie, and basking in the warm Sunshine of Love, and at other times tossed in a Sea of tumultuous Passions, Jealousies, and querulous Altercations. *Melinda* was still uneasy that she could know no more of her Lover's Circumstances, and he as careful to keep her in Ignorance; he assured her he was a Bachelor, and she had no Opportunity to convict him of the Falsity, till a mere Chance put it in her Power to unravel the whole Mystery. This happened at a Visit he had paid her, when, having taken several Papers out of his Pocket to look over, which related to his Affairs in Trade, at his Departure, put them up again, but doing it some-what hastily, he drop't one of them. When he was gone, *Melinda*, on examining the Contents of it, found it to be a Policy of Insurance for a Ship then at Sea, in the Name of N. T. Proprietor of her Cargo, which he had lately Insured. This was as plain as Demonstration could make it, that her Lover was a Merchant, and that he had hitherto appeared to her under the Disguise of a wrong Name.

MELINDA was exceedingly pleased at this lucky Accident, and having got hold of the Clue, resolved to unwind the whole Bottom. Accordingly she enquired of a Merchant of her Acquaintance whether he knew such a Gentleman, calling him by his Name, and whether he had ever seen him upon Change? Her Friend told her, that he knew him very well, that he was a Merchant of great Note, and that he was the largest Dealer in the *Italian Trade* of any Man in *London*. She then asked him if he knew whether he had any Family, and where
he

he lived. His Answer was, that he had a Wife, but no Children, and that he lived in a very handsome House in *Hand-alley* without *Bishopsgate*.

MELINDA had now all the Information she wanted; but who can conceive the Violence of her Passion when she found herself betrayed and deceived in so base a Manner! neither could she forgive herself her own Folly and Indiscretion in suffering herself to be amused with the fine Speeches and passionate Addresses of so vile an Impostor. But what Remedy? None, but what lay in her Tongue, a Weapon she had a perfect Command of, and was determined to exercise it upon him, with all the Virulence of an enraged and disappointed Woman.

WITHOUT hesitating a Moment, she went directly to his House, and upon enquiring for him, he appeared. But how great was his Surprise, how manifest his Shame and Confusion, when he beheld a Lady, whom he as little expected as desired to see in that Place! However, as he was a complete Master in Dissimulation, he presently assumed a serene Countenance, and desired her to walk into a Room. She did so, and had the grating Mortification to see his Wife. But prudently considering that that was not a proper Time nor Place to give a loose to her Indignation, she only told him, that being informed he was concerned in the *Italian Trade*, and as she had some Effects coming from thence in a Ship which had been some Time missing, she had a Mind to insure them; and pulling his own Policy out of her Pocket, said, she had

wrote

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wrote in that Paper the Particulars of her Effects, and entreated him to get her a Policy for them. He received the Paper, and assured her he would serve her in the Affair. Upon which she took her Leave, promising to wait on him again very shortly, to receive his further Instructions.

MR. Churchman soon perceived, that by the Gathering of the Clouds, a terrible Storm was approaching; to weather which, and escape a Shipwreck, would require all his Dexterity and the most exquisite Management. He was sensible his Honour was at Stake, and that should the World be made acquainted with his disingenuous Proceedings in this Affair, it would be a Stain in his Character not easily erased. He knew too, that he had affronted *Melinda* in the highest Degree, and imposed upon her in a Point, an Injury in which that Sex are the least capable of forgiving, that of Love. He found himself reduced to this unavoidable Dilemma, either boldly to face the Enemy, and stand the Fury of her Fire, or quit the Field of Battle, and slink away like a Coward and Runagate. Having therefore duly weighed every Consideration in the Balance of Reason, he thought it was better to stand an Engagement in the open Field, than suffer himself to be attacked in his own Quarters.

ACCORDINGLY he marched, tho' with a trembling Heart, to the Place of Action; where he found *Melinda* ready to receive him; not indeed with her usual Gaiety and obliging Complaisance, but with a Lour in her Look that fully expressed the different Passions with which her Soul was agitated.—How dare you, said

she,

she, (without giving him Leave to speak) appear in my Presence, after so notorious Abuse of my Condescension and good Nature? Where is the Honour you so much valued yourself upon? the Veracity you boasted of? Your Vows, your Oaths, your Protestations? Is there the least Vestige of Truth to be traced in these, which you have so profusely lavished in your perfidious Addresses from the Beginning of your odious Courtship to this very Hour? What Reparation can you make for the Injuries you have done me? I might long ago have been happy in the conjugal Careesses of a Man of Worth and Integrity. What evil Star reigned at my Birth, that destined me to be thus cajoled to my Ruin? Why am I treated in this base and ignominious Manner? To what End or Purpose have you taken all this Pains to deceive me? Could the most inveterate Enemy have used me worse than you have done, under the glozing Professions of Love and Tenderness? The vicious Libertine that robs the harmless Maid of her Honour, has at least the Pretence of gratifying his irregular and lawless Appetite; but you have not even this Pretence, weak and wicked as it is, because you know yourself under an absolute Incapacity (as you was already married) to perform the Promises you perfidiously made me, — Hence — be gone — nor longer plague me with the Sight of a Wretch, so odious and detestable! O that I had the Eyes of a Basilisk, that I could strike thee dead with a Look! — Here Passion choaked her farther Utterance, which yet she continued to express by wringing her Hands, tearing of her Hair, stamping with bottom

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her Feet, Weeping, with all the Tokens of the most exasperated Resentment, until her Spirits being quite exhausted, she sunk down in a Chair, her Breast still heaving, agitated with the Violence of her Passion.

MR. *Churchman*, knowing that a Storm is always succeeded by a Calm, and that it would be in vain to attempt to stop the Torrent of her Rage, gave no Interruption to the Course of it, but patiently waited till it abated of itself. When he perceived she was silent, he thus began : My dear *Melinda*, I must own you have Reason for your Reproaches. I must confess too, that I have acted somewhat insincerely in passing myself upon you for what I really was not. Your Anger is just, and I stand self-condemned of all the Injuries of which you accuse me, unless the Reasons which I have to plead in my Justification shall be allowed sufficient to excuse me. That I have a Wife, is most true ; but at the same Time I must declare, she is very antient and infirm, and so afflicted with a Complication of Distempers, that it is impossible, in all human Probability, that her Life can be of much longer Continuance. It was in the Prospect of her speedy Mortality that I made my Addresses to you ; it was for this Reason that I assumed a fictitious Name, and concealed my Family and Circumstances from your Knowledge. If I have deceived you, it was with a Design to surprize you with a new, and unexpected Scene of Happiness, when the critical Time for such a Discovery was arrived. But your restless Curiosity has disconcerted

certed those Measures which Prudence dictated, and which must have been attended with the most happy Consequences both to yourself and me, had you still remained ignorant of what I took so much Pains to conceal. However, even now, if you would moderate your Passion, and let Reason take Place, I am persuaded that what I have to offer, is not unworthy of your Consideration. It is my Intent and full Resolution, which I will verify by an irrevocable Deed, to make a very handsome Provision for you, if you will continue single to the Death of my Wife; and when that Event happens, I will, with your Consent, become your lawful Husband. This was my Design, and which I should certainly have accomplished in due Time, had you never known a Syllable of what you have so unluckily discovered.

ME LINDA, having by this Time a little recovered her Spirits, yet not cool enough for sedate Reflection, told him she was astonished at his uncommon Assurance, that after so palpable a Conviction of so much Baseness, Ingenuity, and Treachery, he believed she could entertain a Proposal of any Kind, from a Man who had dealt so perfidiously with her, from the first Moment of their Acquaintance. For two Years, added she, have I been lulled asleep, and my Fancy pleased with an *Elysium* of Joy to come, but am at last awakened to Scenes of Horror, and the Sight of a Monster, who, under the Pretence of an inviolable Attachment to my Person, has been acting the Part of a Devil, and meditating my Ruin. — Fly,

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avoid my Presence, lest my just Revenge should prompt me to some rash Action.

WELL, Madam, said Mr. *Churchman*, since your Passion will not at present, permit your hearkening to more moderate Counsels, I will take my Leave, and wait on you at a more favourable Opportunity, when, it may be presumed, your Reason has resumed her Charge, and you have had Leisure to entertain more considerate Reflections.

WHEN he was gone, *Melinda* began seriously to reflect on her present unhappy Situation. She considered that she had indulged his Visits so long, and his Intimacy with her was so well known among all her Acquaintance, that she had but little Reason to expect Overtures of Marriage from any other Gentleman of Fortune. As therefore her Prospect of advantageous Offers from any other Quarter began to lessen, so her Resolution entirely to discard *Churchman* proportionably diminished. After mature Deliberation, and much Perplexity of Mind on so critical an Affair, she at last concluded to give him a calm Hearing at his next Visit.

IT was not long before Mr. *Churchman* again paid his Respects to his angry Mistress. He had, in the Interval of his Absence, suffered a good deal of Anxiety in his Mind, as well on Account of the Slur which this Transaction would bring upon his Character, should it be blown, as the Uneasiness it would occasion in his own Family; for he did not know but *Melinda*, in the Height of her Resentment, might, out of mere Revenge for the Affront he had offered her, expose him among his Friends. He was therefore

fore determined to come, if possible, to Terms of Pacification with her, and purchase Peace almost at any Rate. With these Thoughts and Resolutions in his Head, he once more presented himself before her, yet doubtful of his Success, and anxious for the Issue.

MADAM, said he, at his first Approach, if a poor Delinquent, even after the Judge has passed Sentence upon him, has the Liberty of petitioning the Throne for Mercy, I hope you will not deny me the same Privilege. I am in humble Hopes, that by this Time, you have reconsidered my Case, and that my Crime is not so enormous but it may admit of some Mitigation. My Offence, it is true, is great, yet if there is any Satisfaction within the Compass of my Ability, you may be assured to have it. If nothing less than my Life will compensate for the Injury, I readily yield the Sacrifice; but do not banish me your Presence, which will be worse than Death itself. Make your own Terms for a Reparation of the Wrongs I have done you. Disperse that Cloud from your angry Brow; Severity is not natural to that Countenance, where Pleasantry and good Humour ever reigned. There is a greater Pleasure in extending Mercy to the Penitent than in taking a rigorous Revenge for Injuries received.

PERHAPS, replied *Melinda*, you are of the Opinion of the common Debauchees of the Age, that affirm there is no Crime, as they find but little Difficulty, in deceiving a weak silly Woman; that her Honour, Happiness, and Prosperity are Things of too trifling a Concern to interrupt their Pleasures, how loose and abandoned

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doned soever they be. But let me tell you, that tho' we are but too easy in suffering ourselves to be deluded by your glozing Flatteries, yet, when a Woman of Spirit finds herself deceived and sensibly injured, she is never long to seek for Means to revenge her Wrong. Revenge, did I say? no, let me call it Justice; for what is more equitable, than that he who wilfully and without Cause, does me irreparable Mischief, should be punished with the utmost Severity? And if he is out of the Reach of the Law, can I be blamed for endeavouring to right myself in the best Manner I am able? But suppose my good Nature should incline me to accept of a moderate Satisfaction for all your perfidious Dealings with me, what can you propose as a tolerable Compensation? By this Question, you may easily perceive the Frailty of my Nature, that can put it in your Power again to deceive me. But take Care—remember—*There is no Fury like a Woman scorn'd.*

My dear Melinda, return'd Mr. Churchman hastily, what Thanks, what grateful Acknowledgements are due for this Instance of your Goodness and Condescension in accepting such Satisfaction as I am able to make for the injurious Treatment of which you so justly accuse me! And such an Instance will I give of the Sincerity of my Heart; and the Uprightness of my Intention, as shall convince you, beyond a Possibility of Doubt, of the absolute Power you have gained over me. I will instantly consign all my Effects and Concerns in Trade to *Holland*, where we will go and live together in the Enjoyment of all the Pleasures that Wealth can purchase.

Or, Intriguing Husband. 31

purchase. As to my Wife, she shall remain in *London*, where I will allow her a competent Maintenance.

No, said *Melinda*, that you shall never do. That would be an Act of such Injustice to your Wife, as would be unpardonable in me to countenance, and in you to commit. What a Topic of Scandal would this afford the censorious World to descant upon! How soon would our Story be rhimed in Ballads, and made a Subject for Ridicule by every little pert Witling, who fancies he has Gall enough to write a Satire? No, rather let me return to my original Privacy, to live, as I ever did, innocent, if not rich; a Little will content one that has no Ambition; I always had Enough, and Superfluities can easily be spared.

Most excellent Lady, replied Mr. *Churchman*, how charming is your Discourse; every Word has the Weight and Importance of an Oracle, and leaves a thorough Conviction upon the Mind. You have satisfied me that my Scheme is not founded on Reason or Justice, and therefore I will think no more of it, but propose another, to which, I hope, you will have no Exception; and that is, I will constantly furnish you with such Sums of Money from Time to Time as you shall think requisite, as well to defray the necessary Expences of House-keeping, as to enable you to make a Figure in high Life; not a Lady at Court or in the City shall make a more splendid Eclat than you; all the Diversions in Vogue you shall partake of; and every Thing that can delight or amuse your Fancy shall be at your Command; so long as
my

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my Wife remains with me, and after her Decease, you shall share my Fortune in lawful Wedlock.

THIS Proposal, as it flattered a certain Vanity incident to the Fair Sex, that of attracting the Eyes and the Homage of Mankind, and making a Figure in Life superior to those who before thought themselves her Equals, or above her, met with no disagreeable Reception. In short, by the Power of his golden Eloquence, her Anger was dissipated, and she was prevailed upon to accept the temporary Provision which he promised to make for her. Pursuant to this Scheme, a spacious House was taken in *Blewit's Buildings* in *Fetter-Lane*, genteelly furnished, and Servants were hired to wait on her.

ALL this was transacted in the Year 1745. And now *Melinda* vies in Richness of Dress with the most opulent of her Sex, shines at Assemblies, and every Night, one or other of the public Entertainments is honoured with her Company. And as her Lover had assured her he was Master of a very large Fortune, and worth not less than 100, 000*l.* she could not think of laying any Restraint upon her Inclination, or of setting any Limits to her Pleasures; and as her Demands upon him were pretty frequent as well as large, he, in a short Time, began to perceive, that a little good Advice was highly necessary with regard to the Regulation of her Conduct. But as it was a Point of the utmost Delicacy to touch upon, he could not persuade himself to tell her his Dislike to the Measures she was pursuing; but thinking it would come much bet-

ter

ter from one of her own Friends, he wrote to him the following Letter.

SIR

AS I know you have a very great Esteem for *Melinda*, I shall make no other Apology for giving you this Trouble.

That poor young Gentlewoman, who is naturally the best, honestest and most virtuous in her Inclinations, by the Violence of her own Passions, by bad Example and bad Advice, seems now entirely to have given up all Sentiments of Reason and Reflection, and to be very near hurrying herself on to Destruction. It would be, Sir, the greatest Act of Charity, if you and your Spouse would immediately and without Loss of Time, give her some kind, friendly, and honest Advice. It would be a Sin so much Merit should be sunk to Perdition for want of a sincere Friend to advise with; I have done my utmost; but I believe what you say would be more regarded. Could you persuade her to board and lodge in some sober, reputable private Family, where she might have good Company and good Counsel it would be the only Means to save her; I am sure her Relations would pay for it genteelly. If you will take this Trouble, and should succeed, you will have the Satisfaction of having done a worthy and a good Action.

I am, SIR,

Your unknown humble Servant.

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MELINDA's Friend shewed her this Letter; but as she was conscious that she had given herself no greater a Latitude in her Pleasures, than was consistent with Innocence, and had taken no other Liberties than what Mr. Churchman himself had indulged her in, and approved, by his own verbal Declarations to her, she took but little Notice of his literary Advice.

As Mr. Churchman had been at a great deal of Costs and Pains to purchase this Jewel, we may be sure he was exceeding vigilant in securing it to himself, and therefore, no wonder if he grew cautious of exposing it too much to publick View. Melinda had Youth and Beauty, Charms that would naturally engage her in Temptations, which would require more Prudence, than generally falls to the Share of a young Lady in the full Perfection of her Bloom, as she was, to defend herself against. Mr. Churchman, more sensible of her Danger than herself, took several Methods to intimate to her, how much it behoved her to be upon her Guard. The following Letter, which contains many grave and salutary Admonitions, was wrote, as he says, in Haste, as he was going to set out on a long Journey; that his Counsel might appear, as proceeding from a real Concern for her Welfare, and not from any Jealousy of her Conduct.

BUT here it ought to be observed, that, to prevent any Use that might be made of his Letters to his Disadvantage, in case they should happen to miscarry, he always began them with *Dear Sir*, and concluded with *Ja. Churchman*, or some other fictitious Name. But to the Letter.

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DEAR

' DEAR SIR,

' I am hurrying away this Moment; my Fellow-traveller, will not indulge me with
' an Hour longer; so that I am so unhappy
' as to set out without taking my Leave, or
' even of digesting those Thoughts in Writing,
' which I intended to communicate to you;
' so may expect them at my Return, which
' will be as quick as possible, may be, in eight
' or ten Days, if I can dispatch my Affairs at
' Exeter, and not be obliged to go farther; which
' I shall endeavour at. You know how much I
' esteem you, and will not impute this to any
' Slight or Neglect. Your Youth and Experience
' call for frequent Advice and Assistance; and
' as I have so much Regard for your Welfare,
' would not leave you a Day, without using
' those kind and friendly Offices I have always
' promised you, could I avoid it. My Stay will
' be as short as possible. In the mean-while, let
' me desire you to make use of the good Sense
' you are so much Master of; be circumspect in
' your Conduct; do no Action without first
' thinking whether it will have a good or bad
' Consequence. The Eyes of all the World are
' wide-open on Persons of your Age and Station.
' Therefore to keep up a Dignity and excellent
' Character in Life, a Man ought to be every
' Moment on the Guard; to say or do nothing
' worthy of Censure; be particularly choice in your
' Company; keep none that are trifling. You
' well know how to pass your Time advantage-
' oufly, in forming your young Mind and im-
' proving your Judgment, and making Prepara-
tion

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tion for that Alteration, you apprehend, is likely soon to happen to you. If you fling away your Time, which is the most valuable of any Thing, it will have a sad Reflection; if you employ it well, it will be a Blessing to you, and a Comfort to your Friends. Avoid cautiously, every Thing that is profuse or expensive; before you part with a Shilling, think very well how difficult it is to get one. You may meet with many pretended Friends, who have no other Design, than to make a Property of you to their own Advantage. If you wanted a Penny Assistance, you would soon discover the Truth of what I say. If you suffer such People to lead you into Expence, you will disoblige your real Friends, and they will laugh at your Ruin. The last Supply will be deemed a full Sufficiency for three Months, when you may expect another such, and so on, if it be not your own Fault. As to Particulars, I have no Time to explain myself, and shall only say in general, that you may depend on what I last promised, and assure yourself I shall be as good as my Word, as long as your Conduct is deserving, which I hope will be as long as Life. Pray excuse Haste, and I shall always remain sincerely,

DEAR SIR,

Your most true Friend, and humble Servant,

JA. CHURCHMAN.

ONE would imagine, that when Mr. Churchman sat down to write this Letter, he was ready booted

booted and spurred, and his Horse waiting at the Door, and that the Moment he had finished, sealed it up, and given it to the Post, he mounted, and with his Fellow-traveller, set out on their Journey. No such Matter ; for that very Evening he paid a Visit to his dear *Melinda*. Whether he designed this as a Scheme to find out what Company she kept, when she might reasonably suppose he was at too great a Distance to give her any Interruption ; or whether his Intention was, to give her an agreeable Surprize by his sudden and unexpected Appearance, I know not : *Melinda*, however, took it in the most disadvantageous Sense, and rallied him pretty severely upon his prying Jealousy, that would never suffer either himself or her, to enjoy a Moment's Peace. However, that she was mightily obliged to him for those excellent Lessons he had given her in his Letter, for regulating her Conduct ; for to be sure, as she was a young, silly, ignorant Creature, and he a Person of consummate Wisdom and Experience, it was an Act of great Condescension and Goodness in him, to be at so much Pains in giving her such wholsome Instructions. That, however, she had Vanity enough to think, that she was able to distinguish, what Company was proper for her to keep, and what not. And as to the OEcconomy, which he so earnestly recommended to her Observation, she could not charge herself with any Extravagance. That it was by his Encouragement that she took into a gay Life, and if he could not afford to support her in it, she would with Pleasure return to that peaceable Obscurity, from whence he had dragg'd her. And therefore left it entirely to his own Option,

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tion; whether she was to expect a Continuance of his Generosity, or a Declaration of his Ingratitude.

MR. Churchman was not a little abashed at these home Expostulations; but recollecting himself, answered, That when he gave those little Cautions in his Letter, he was far from intending any Offence or Affront, and he was extremely concerned she should put a wrong Construction upon his honest Meaning; that he had so great a Regard for her Honour and Reputation, that he thought it his Duty to caution her to be upon her Guard, especially as she was liable to many Snares and Temptations, which would require all her Prudence and Virtue to encounter. That if his Behaviour discovered any Signs of Jealousy, she ought to impute it to the Excess of his Love, which would not suffer him to look upon any of her Actions with Indifference. Therefore, my charming Angel, said he, clear up that Cloud from your angry Brow, and let smiling Serenity resume its native Place; let me read my Pardon in your Eyes, and have it sealed with a Kiss of your heavenly Lips.

ALL Differences and Disputes being thus ended by this happy Reconciliation; Love and Harmony ran smoothly on in a Stream of uninterrupted Joy and Happiness; and when the necessary Calls of Business required his Absence, the Vacancy was agreeably supplied by an Intercourse of Letters, and mutual Exchange of Affection and Tenderness. The following is an Answer to one of hers of this Kind, in which our Lover appears in a Light in which we have not yet seen him.

DEAR

DEAR SIR,

I Received yours, and admire your Elegancy in writing. I see a Struggle between Art and Nature; the last seems to have the Superiority. Where is now our boasted Pre-heminence, when our most fixed and determined Resolutions are staggered, nay, made void by the Glance of an Eye, or a Sentence in a Letter? I did not wish to have you so well acquainted with your own Power; but I find you not only know it, but even triumph in your Empire, and insult your Slaves, by letting them know their Liberty is irrecoverably lost: You have Charms sufficient to captivate the most elevated Minds: But with my natural Plainness and Simplicity, who never thought of misleading you by flattering Speeches, let me desire you not to rate your Excellencies too high. So I have seen a Gem of great Price, brought into Disregard, by an over Estimation of the Owner.

IT is true, I lately thought myself my own Master; now I must acknowledge the Force of your Beauty, but much more of your charming Sense, which is a thousand Times more valuable and durable. See how far I am from Flattery! You know rarely well how to gain Hearts; I have experienced it; I thought mine impregnable; now I know my Weakness. You have the difficult Part to learn yet, which is, to preserve those you have conquered, and you think are worth keeping. This is a hard Task, when you have to do with one of my Complexion, who has so many other

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' other Sort of Calls to divert him from the
' Voice of Love; naturally jealous in those Af-
' fairs; studious, morose, full of Cares, and
' void of those Endearments which captivate
' your Sex, who are generally struck with
' false Shew and outward Appearances. It is
' true, a most perfect and sublime Passion of
' Love, Evenness of Temper, a constant Com-
' placency, an extreme Modesty in Behaviour,
' and a most consummate Virtue in all Respects,
' with a regular and good Oeconomy in dome-
' stick Affairs, are irresistible Charms. But alas!
' where, or why, should such an one as I, ex-
' pect to meet so many Perfections united, when
' hardly one of them is to be met with in the
' common Course of Life? I, that scrutinize
' into the inmost Recesses of the Mind; that
' distract myself, possibly, with false Appear-
' ances; that can bear no Disappointment; that
' am outrageous to find myself in the least Mi-
' stake! You will say, such an one should not
' live, or should live by himself, unfit for social
' Company, who would pretend to alter the
' Nature of Things: I must own I am unhappy,
' and must always be so.

' When Nature dictates your Writing, how
' sweetly flows the ſtyle? — When Passion go-
' verns, how biting and poignant are the Ex-
' pressions? Pray, when you write again, let
' Nature and Love tell you what to say. Adieu.

BUT tho' for some Time, no rising Cloud
appeared to obscure or disturb the Serenity of our
Lovers Sunshine; yet at length a croſs Wind
blew up a Storm, which however was but of
short

short Continuance, and, like a sudden Squall at Sea, made a great Noise while it lasted, but soon died away. It happened as *Melinda* was one Evening walking in the Gardens at *Vauxhall*, a Lady, not of the most unexceptionable Character, and with whom *Melinda* had but a slight Acquaintance, joined her Company. While they were walking together they were met by Mr. *Churchman*, who seemed vastly surprized at the Encounter, for had he seen her in close Conference with the greatest Rake in Town, he could not have expressed more Astonishment; which produced the following Letter, which she received from him the next Day.

DEAR SIR,

' I AM sorry I was so weak as to discover so
' much Surprize when I last saw you. Eve-
' ry such Circumstance used to fire me with
' Madness; but I now begin to get the better
' of it; as there is no such Thing as altering the
' Nature of Things, I would now become my-
' self again, and free my Mind from those Fet-
' ters, which, if continued, must drag me on
' to Perdition. What I mentioned in my last,
' was only a friendly Caution, not to keep ex-
' pensive Company. As it was not well taken,
' I shall take no more such Liberties; 'tis med-
' ling with what don't concern me; I am sure
' you think so, or would not in a Moment have
' forgot me, and my Advice. But don't mi-
' stake me; I am not for abridging your Di-
' versions; I have no Controul over you, nor
' do I desire it. You are certainly Master of

F

yourself,

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' yourself, and your own Actions, and not ac-
' countable to me for them. You have a Right
' to chuse what Company, and take what Ad-
' vice you like best. Those you confide in,
' will, I hope, prove your truest and real
' Friends, and afford you the best Advice and
' Assistance. I am sure it is not in my Power
' to do it. Enjoy the present Season, and don't
' confine yourself a single Moment, or hinder
' any Recreation on my Account. You have
' Youth and Charms; it would be cruel to have
' them lost. I shall be obliged to be often in
' the Country, and my Return uncertain.
' Whenever I call, and should not meet with
' you, shall not take it the least amiss. I men-
' tion this that you may not say, I want to keep
' you confined; I already told you I do not,
' and would have you enjoy yourself in the Way
' you like best, as undoubtedly you have Friends
' to support it. For my Part, I must speak
' plainly, I cannot, nor will not deceive you
' in an Affair of this Consequence. If I am
' able and well, about the 22d *August* next, I
' shall receive my Rents, and will then endeavour
' to remit you a Sum equal to the last, and think
' you may depend on it were I not to see you
' till then. My bodily Disorder continues; I
' hope for Relief from Change of Air; that of
' my Mind will be conquered by Absence and
' Resolution; and don't say that Absence will
' be any real Concern to you, for I could not
' persuade myself to it. To conclude, I al-
' ways wished you well, and always shall; and
' 'tis my Nature and Inclination to use every
' one well, and to be well used myself.'

Yours, &c.
Now,

Now, whether these little Excursions of *Melinda* made any great Impression on *Churchman's* jealous Temper, or whether he had a Mind to have it always in his Power to bring her to his Beck, when-ever she discovered an Inclination to withdraw herself from him, he resolved to act upon other Principles than he had done. Hitherto he had given her Money, without requiring any Account, Note, or Memorandum; but in the Year 1745, he bethought himself of this Method, *viz.* whenever she wanted a Supply, he sent her the Sum by a particular Friend, and at the same Time sent a promissory Note for her to sign as an Acknowledgment that she borrowed the Money; which he pretended was only to satisfy him that his Friend had not deceived him; but we shall soon see what a different Use *Churchman* afterwards made of those Notes, which in the whole amounted to about 65*l.*

In the same Year, 1745, *Melinda* having a Desire to see her Friends and Relations in *Ireland*, *Churchman* consented to the Proposal, and promised to bear the Expence of her Journey, and gave her Leave to draw upon him for what Money she should have Occasion for while there, which it was agreed should be Six Months. But before she set out, she let her House, and sold the Goods, and in June proceeded on her Journey. At the Expiration of Six Months she returned, and went to a Lodging in *Southampton-Row, Bloomsbury*, where *Churchman* continued to visit and support her as he had done before, still assuring her he would marry her on the Death of his Wife. But *Melinda*, having observed that he was very capricious, and easily

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provoked at any trifling Incident, was willing to have some better Security for the Performance of his Promise than his bare Word, and required some substantial Assurance under his own Hand. Upon which he immediately wrote this Note.

London, 5 Nov. 1747. *I under written hereby engage myself to Melinda, to sign a Bond at any Time when ever she shall request it, obliging myself to marry the said Melinda, at any Time after the Decease of my present Wife R. T. As Witness my Hand, N. T.*

ACCORDINGLY the next Day he gave her his Bond in 50,000*l.* Penalty, reciting, that himself was a married Man, and had a Wife living, who was in a very declining and bad State of Health, and whose Life was not expected to be of long Continuance or Duration; that he had for some Time past contracted a particular Friendship and Regard for and with *Melinda*, then a single Woman; in Consequence whereof he freely and voluntarily offered, proposed, promised, contracted and agreed with the said *Melinda*, that if he should survive his then Wife, he would, within Six Months thereafter, marry her according to the Rites, and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, provided she was then ready and willing to marry him; which *Melinda* complied with, and promised to perform on her Part. Which Bond he executed in due Form, and delivered to *Melinda*.

MELINDA, apprehending herself to be under as firm an Engagement to remain single, as he was to marry her on the Death of his Wife, refused several advantageous Offers in Marriage that were made her; particularly one, of which

Churchman

Churchman was acquainted, and intimidated the Gentleman from proceeding in his Addresses, by Letters, in which he affirmed himself to be her Husband.

THAT this was no Fiction, or a Courtship pretended by *Melinda*, to work upon the Passions of Mr. Churchman, in order to extort from him some more advantageous Terms, is plain; not only because he had already granted her Request to the utmost Extent of her Wishes; but likewise from a Letter, which she received from her new Lover, of which, the following is an exact Transcript.

MADAM,

SINCE I am so happy to find, where I hope to make myself compleatly blessed, I cannot, consistent with the Love I bear you, abandon the happy Pursuit; therefore I must request the Favour of the Liberty to wait on you, since you, I fear, think the Honour of an Answer from your dear Hand too great; this Bearer waits the happy Accent, when I shall tell you in Person, how much, and how sincerely, Madam,

I am,

most affectionately Yours,

Z. A.

THAT this Gentleman was sincere in his Addresses to *Melinda*, and courted her with the sole View of making her his Wife, she could give other

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other demonstrable Proofs; but that being foreign to my Design, I shall only observe, that Mr. Churchman being perfectly informed, how vigorously the Gentleman pressed his Suit, and considering at the same Time, how apt the Fair Sex are to change their Minds, especially when an agreeable Object flatters them with a better Chance, he was so nettled at it, that he never rested until he had entirely broke off that dangerous Correspondence.

SOON after the Execution of the said Bond, *Melinda*, considering that the promisory Notes she had given him, for several Sums of Money he had supplied her with, still lay against her, and might some Time or other bring her into Trouble, and as he did not expect, as he had often declared, that she should ever pay them, nor could now have any Pretence for keeping them, to deter her from deserting him, since that was effectually prevented in the Bond, she desired he would deliver them up to be cancelled. Mr. Churchman allowed her Request to be just and reasonable; but said, he had been so very careless of those Notes, that they were either lost or mislaid; and that he did not then know where to find them; but to make her easy, would give her a full Discharge, as she thought he did, by the following Note.

I N. T. of Bishopsgate-street, London, Merchant, do hereby make known to them it may concern, That by these Presents I do entirely give up and disclaim all, and every Right, Pretensions and Demands whatsoever, from this Day forward, and for ever hereafter, upon Melinda, according to her Desire. Nov. 27, 1747. N. T.

AFTER

AFTER this, by Mr. Churchman's Advice, she took a large House in *Southampton-Buildings, Chancery-Lane*, at the annual Rent of 40*l.* But afterwards he declining in his Circumstances, a Commission of Bankruptcy, dated *January 13, 1747*, issued out against him, and he was thereupon declared a Bankrupt, and his Estate and Effects vested with Assignees, appointed for that Purpose.

BUT, though Mr. Churchman laboured under these Misfortunes, yet he still continued his Correspondence with *Melinda*, and in his Letters to her, expressed himself in the most kind, endearing, and affectionate Manner; one of which, was conceived in the following Terms.

MY DEAR CHILD,

' I HAVE often given you Hints, of what
' I am now obliged to tell you plainly, hav-
' ing stifled it in my Bosom, until it bursts out
' by Force, and much against my Inclinations.

' My Dear Angel, I am no longer in a Con-
' dition of supporting you, nor myself, in the
' Manner I have hitherto done. The Misfor-
' tunes and Losses that I have, and do daily meet
' with, are unsurmountable. At this present Time,
' I should not be able to say, whether the Bread
' I eat, or the Coat on my Back, be my own,
' or the Property of another; and though I am
' obliged by my Businels, to make a small Shew
' in the World, it is uncertain how long I may
' have my Liberty to go about in it. For, to speak
' plainly to you, my Dear, and in Confidence,
' I fear I owe more than I shall be able to pay,
 unless

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unless I should be enabled to support and keep up my Credit, and to trade successfully for some Years. I am sensible how unpleasing such Discourse must be to you, my Dear, who never yet knew any but imaginary Evils. I would not have troubled you with any Recital of my Unhappiness, could I possibly have prevented it. But do not imagine, my dear Soul, that I charge any of them to your Account. No, I have too great a Sense of your Merits and Deserts, and what gives me Trouble is, that I can no-ways answer them. It seems rather, that Providence is so kind as to let us see plainly, how much we are both mistaken in our Choice. Look back to the Moment I first beheld your Dear Self, and pick me out if you can, which of those Hours was a happy one; and cast your Eyes forwards, and dress up Futurity with all the pleasing Ideas you can, it will on Examination appear, that nothing but Misery can be expected. This will put your Affection to the Test, and give you Scope to make use of your Reason and Patience. Receive this News like a Woman truly noble, and great of Soul, who knows how to bear up against the Torrent of Affliction, and whose Inclinations and Passions are not grounded on low, sordid, and ungenerous mercenary Motives. Can you bring yourself to consider, that Health of Body and Peace of Mind, are the only true and solid Riches? That a small Portion of the Goods of Fortune, well managed, will be found sufficient for a Mind that can master itself? That the greatest Fortunes are, sometimes, obtained at the Expence of Soul and Body, and when obtained, melt

Or, Intriguing Husband. 49

• melt away like Snow before the Sun, and leave
• nothing behind but Horror and Remorse, and
• a Remembrance of a Life spent wickedly or
• vainly? I say, could you be persuaded of these
• Things, it would be going a great Way towards
• Happiness and Ease of Mind, which can never
• be met with in Riches. But can I expect such
• Reasonings as these, should be able to affect a
• Mind, so strongly tainted with different Ideas?
• or that your Youth, Beauty, and want of
• Experience, could possibly bear such Shackles
• and Fetters? No, it is a Thing to be wished
• for, but not expected.

• PRAY, my Dear, consider of what I say
• coolly, and without Prejudice or Paffion; and
• let me know how, and in what Manner I can
• contribute to your Satisfaction. If what I
• mentioned to you a few Days ago, will make
• you entirely easy, I will labour early and late
• to obtain it, and content myself with Bread
• and Water, if I cannot do better. Indeed,
• others would think such an Allowance gene-
• rous and noble, from one in my Circumstances.
• But you have been used to a Profusion with-
• out Bounds or Limits, which will be difficult
• to wear off your Mind. If you retire to the
• Country near the Town, or would be pleased
• with decent Lodgings in another Part of the
• Town, and less expensive, you might, I think,
• be easy. But I barely mention these Things,
• desiring my Dearest, as I said before, to con-
• sider it without Paffion, and take those Re-
• solutions you think most conducive to your
• Happiness, towards which I will contribute
• what is in my Power.

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‘ You would do well to consult your Friends,
‘ if you have any here, upon this Affair, which
‘ is of the utmost Consequence to your future.
‘ Felicity.

‘ IN forming a Judgment of what is to come,
‘ it will be well to reflect, how little I have
‘ had, or can have of your Company, which
‘ takes away all the Pleasure of Life.

MR. *Churchman* being declared a Bankrupt,
and summoned before the Commissioners, to
give a Detail of his Debts and Effects, in the
Morning of his first Appearance before them,
wrote to *Melinda* the following Letter.

‘ My Angel must be content with a very
‘ few Lines. This Day I am to make the first
‘ Appearance; I could wish it were in the other
‘ World, if I were prepared for it. I do not
‘ know how to stand the Shock; nor do value
‘ Life, were it not for your Intreaties, which
‘ will make me endeavour to keep up my Spi-
‘ rits if possible. I am in such Confusion, that
‘ I cannot answer your good Letter until next
‘ Tuesday: I shall only say, it is the only Thing
‘ which could possibly give me Comfort; your
‘ Expressions are so tender, and withal so ho-
‘ nourable, that they can never be enough re-
‘ membered; pray let me have them two or
‘ three Times a-Week, and as soon as I can
‘ compose my Mind, shall not be wanting in
‘ Return. It is inexpressible the Concern I am
‘ now under, until I know how Matters will
‘ go.—I send my Soul a small Bason, so full
‘ of Fruit, that some has dropt off. They
‘ look well, considering the Time of Year; if
‘ the Flavour is not so fine, it will at least please
‘ those

' those dear Eyes, being charmingly done. Excuse my Nonsense, being designed only to divert my Angel for a Moment or two.'

I shall introduce one more of Mr. Churchman's Letters, but whether wrote before, or after the preceding one, I cannot now recollect, both Letters being without Name or Date.

' IF you had thought proper to have gone for a Month or two, where you mentioned, it would have been prudent at this Seafon: But as you have no Intention to alter Measures, there is a Necessity for speaking plainly; I can no longer bear the Expence, neither can I, nor durst I, in my Circumstances, attend any more, where you are now. You know how publick the Affair has been made, by imprudent Management. What Mercy am I to expect from the World, when I am soon to be accountable for all my Proceedings in a publick Manner, to have it proved in open Court, it may be before two or three hundred People, as well what is past, as what you still desire, to continue at *Bloomsbury*. Would exasperated Persons shew me any Compassion, when they are told such an Affair continues to the last Minute? Ought I to expect any Thing from them, but the most rigorous Resentment? and a Jail for my Portion as long as I live? which cannot be long, for it will be impossible to survive the Loss of Credit, and Esteem of the World. I am sorry you have no Notion of Humanity or Compassion, to one who ought to be considered in another Light. I can say no more, than that you may always depend on me, for what may be

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‘ my Power. You know my Intentions are,
‘ and always will be, honourable towards you.
‘ As this is your Choice, you must take your
‘ Chance, and be satisfied with what may be
‘ in my Power; I cannot work Miracles, nor
‘ make Gold of flint Stones. I again tell you,
‘ I will always serve you as far as in my Power,
‘ and should be glad you would take in good
‘ Part, what I now write, as I am far from de-
‘ siring to have Disputes with you, which you
‘ know have been already too fatal. But should
‘ you take it amiss, it will be out of my Power
‘ to help it. When you are in Company, you
‘ do not allow yourself Time for Consideration.
‘ I wish these Truths may lead you to Reflec-
‘ tion, and bring you to some steady Way of
‘ thinking, which I shall be happy to hear
‘ from you, and contribute to the last, towards
‘ your Satisfaction. If you have Resolutions
‘ of any Sort in your Mind, which you think
‘ will make you easy any Way, now is the
‘ Time to inform me of them; and, as I have
‘ said a Million of Times, nothing in my Pow-
‘ er shall be wanting.’

I HAVE given this Letter a Place here, not so much to shew Mr. Churchman’s Concern, that his Intrigue with *Melinda* would prejudice him with his Creditors, if they should come to know it; but as a Proof of his infinite Chagrin, that he was no longer able to support her in the Enjoyment of all those Pleasures and Gaieties, which he had so long encouraged her to indulge, her Fondness for which, he might reasonably suppose, she could not presently mortify.

H 1.

HITHERTO the Reader has been entertained with the History and Progress of this extraordinary Courtship; we must now change the Scene, and introduce another Actor, who will give a strange Turn to the Course of this Amour.

VARRO (for that is the Gentleman's Name) and *Melinda*, were both Natives of *Hybernia*, and Neighbour's Children, and consequently were acquainted from their Infancy. *Varro* was of a creditable Family, and had a liberal Education, and when of Age, took to the Sea, and went several trading Voyages up the *Mediterranean*. At his Return from such Voyages, he constantly paid his Respect to his old Acquaintance and Countrywoman *Melinda*. It was at one of these Visits, in October 1747, that Mr. *Churchman* first saw him; and on enquiring who he was, *Melinda* told him he was her Brother-in-law, having married her half-Sister; this she said, to take off his Suspicion that *Varro* came there with some other View.

VARRO was, at that Time, Clerk to the Ship *Duke*, which was then bound on a trading Voyage to *Leghorn*, *Naples*, and other Places in *Italy*; with which Mr. *Churchman* was so well pleased, that an Intimacy and Friendship was commenced between them, and he entrusted him with two Casks of Hard-ware, which he sent on Board the said Ship, consigned to *Leghorn*, and commissioned him to dispose of the Goods, and to buy some flowered Silks, white Sattin, and Velvet, to bring them over with him, and to deliver them to *Melinda*. Besides this Order, *Varro* received another from him before he sailed, to buy a sufficient Quantity of Crimson *Genoa* Damask or Velvet, to make a Bed.

VAR-

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VARRO proceeded on his Voyage, and arrived at *Leghorn*; but before he had sold the two Casks of Hard - ware, Advice was brought him from *England*, that Mr. *Churchman* was become a Bankrupt, with an Order to deliver up the said Goods for the Benefit of his Creditors, which was done accordingly. Not long afterwards he received a Letter from Mr. *Churchman*, desiring him to bring three Casks of *Chianti* Wine. By another Letter, dated in *April 1747*, he informed him, that he was discharged by the Consent of all his Creditors; and by another Letter, dated in the same Month, he desired him to bring the Silks, &c. which he had before ordered him to buy for his Brother, meaning *Melinda*, together with a Box of *Roman Flowers*. Which several Commissions and Orders, *Varro* punctually obeyed, and on his Return, delivered the Silks and Velvets, which cost him 2*l.*, to *Melinda*, and the Wine and Flowers to Mr. *Churchman* himself; the Whole, with the Expences, amounting to 40*l.*

MR. *Churchman* being by his late Misfortunes, very much reduced in his Circumstances, was not able to make that plentiful Provision for his *Melinda* as he had formerly done, and promised to do; and therefore advised her to retire into the Country, and live within Compas, which, if she did, he would still allow her a competent Maintenance; and when *Varro* came Home from his Voyage, intimated as much to him, persuading him to go and lodge with her, at her House in *Southampton-Buildings*. He likewise desired him to advise her to go into private Lodgings, and reduce her Expences, for he could not support

support her as he had done. He farther added, that if she was inclined to alter her Condition, he freely consented to it, and would, in that Case, pay off all her Debts, set her clear in the World, give her Money in her Pocket, and settle an Annuity of 100*l* upon her, during his Life; which, he averred, was all the Amends he had in his Power to make her.

By this Time Mr. *Churchman* had, by some Means or other, discovered, that *Varro* was not *Melinda's* Brother-in-Law, but only her Countryman and Acquaintance. As soon as he knew this, he very earnestly pressed *Varro* to marry her, nor was less urgent with her to accept him for a Husband; which if she complied with, he would give her a Bond of a 1000*l* Penalty, to pay her an Annuity of 50*l* a Year, by Quarterly Payments. Besides which, he would give her 50*l* a Year, but would not have it drawn in Writing, because he would be entitled to her Thanks for it.

ENCOURAGED by these fair and promising Speeches of Mr. *Churchman*, a Marriage was accordingly solemnized between *Varro* and *Melinda* in November 1748; and on the 16th of December following, a Bond was executed by Mr. *Churchman*, signed by his real Name, *N. T.* reciting, that whereas the said *N. T.* had, for some Years, been intimately acquainted with *Melinda*, who, at his Request, had continued unmarried, to her great Disadvantage; and the said *N. T.* being willing to make her some Recompence and Compensation for her being so long unmarried, had agreed, and thereby bound himself, his Executors, &c. to pay to the said *Varro*, his Executors,

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cutors, &c. for the Use of *Melinda*, one Annuity, or yearly Sum of 50*l* during the natural Life of the said *N. T.* by four equal quarterly Payments.

This was the Purport of the Bond; but before Mr. *Churchman* signed it, he desired *Varro* to write underneath it, this farther Clause or Condition, *viz.* *It is agreed by the said Melinda, that she will not marry from the Date of this Bond, until the Death of R. T. the Wife of the said N. T.* otherwise this Bond to be of no Force. The Meaning of which, as then understood by the Parties, was this, *viz.* that *Varro* being a Seafaring Man, and therefore liable to Accidents, *Melinda* should not, in Case he died, marry again with any other Person until the Death of the said *R. T.* To which Bond there was only one subscribing Witness. At the same Time Mr. *Churchman* made her a Present of 10*l*, and when the first quarterly Payment became due, he paid *Varro* 12*l* 10*s* of the said Annuity.

A friendly Correspondence continued between all the Parties, until the Month of May following, in 1749, when *Varro*, intending a Voyage to *Minorca*, and expecting to be absent from *England* about three Years, had a more than ordinary Occasion for Money, and therefore requested Mr. *Churchman* to pay him the Money he owed him upon Account; which Mr. *Churchman* refused, alledging, that as he had already settled with *Melinda*, and entered into a Security to pay her 50*l* a Year, during his Life, he ought not, neither would he pay *Varro* for the Silks, Velvets, &c. which he had ordered him to buy in *Italy*, unless *Melinda* would deliver him up those Goods. Upon which Refusal, *Varro* took out a Writ against

gainst him; but being unwilling to expose him by a publick Arrest, did not give his Warrant to an Officer, but acquainted Mr. *Churchman* with what he had done, that so he might either put in Bail to it, or end the Affair in an amicable Manner. Upon which, they went to a Tavern together; and in their Conference, Mr. *Churchman* said, it was hard to pay for the Silks after the Agreement made with *Melinda*, for whose Use they were bought; but as *Varro* owed him thirteen Guineas for Oil and a Lottery Ticket, he would acquit him of that, and give him fifteen Guineas more in full of all Demands on his own Account; but desired *Varro* to write his Receipt for no more than 3*l* 18*s*, the Price of the Oil, alledging as a Reason, that it was to satisfy his Wife, that he had paid *Varro* no more than that Sum; accordingly he wrote a Receipt in that Manner, and as Mr. *Churchman* had before paid his first quarterly Payment on the Bond, *Varro* had no farther Demand upon him at that Time.

ALL Matters in Difference between them being thus settled and adjusted, *Varro* set out on his Voyage, from whence he did not return, until the latter End of October following. Mr. *Churchman* had not in his Absence, paid *Melinda* any more of the Annuity due upon the said Bond. At Christmas therefore, there being three Quarters due, amounting to 3*l* 10*s*. *Varro* applied to him for Payment. But though a Year before, he was so ready and willing to settle this Annuity on *Melinda*, and thought it but a small Satisfaction for the Injury he had

done her, in keeping her so long from the Comforts of a conjugal Life; yet now, when he was called upon to make good the Articles of Agreement, he made use of various Pretences and Procrastinations, to excuse himself from the Performance. From which Conduct of his, one would imagine, that his Forwardness in making such Settlement, proceeded either from his Inability to support *Melinda*, in her profuse and expensive manner of living as he had formerly done, or from the Uneasiness he met with in his own Family; for his Wife, it seems, had been informed of his Clandestine Proceedings in this Affair; the Knowledge of which, one may easily judge, occasioned many Jarrings and Contentions between them. To put a Stop to which, he imagined, nothing would be more conducive, than to get *Melinda* disposed of in Marriage; which having at last accomplished, and the End he proposed by it answered, he was willing to disengage himself from all other Obligations he had laid himself under on that Account. But whatever was the true Motive for discontinuing the Payment of the Annuity, no Arguments *Varro* could use, were sufficient to prevail with him, to make good his obligatory Contract. After several Controversies, they agreed to have a Meeting in the Presence of two Friends, and, if possible, to settle the Affair amicably. Accordingly they met, when Mr. *Churchman* offered to pay down one hundred Guineas, if she would deliver up the Bond; which *Varro* absolutely refusing, Mr. *Churchman* desired the Company to take Notice, that he offered the said one hundred Guineas, only as a Present to *Melinda*,

and

and not for the Bond. Upon which, they parted without coming to any Conclusion.

VARRO was greatly incensed at Mr. *Churchman's* disingenuous Proceedings, and therefore resolved to try by Law, to compel him to an Observance of a Contract he had so voluntarily entered into. Pursuant to this Resolution, he takes out a Writ against him, and having got a Warrant thereupon, gives it to an Officer. But meeting Mr. *Churchman* the next Day upon *Change*, tells him what he had done. Mr. *Churchman*, under the greatest Concern imaginable, answered, that his Credit was at Stake, and therefore earnestly entreated him to prevent his being arrested. Accordingly, *Varro* very generously takes the Warrant from the Officer, and gives it to Mr. *Churchman*, upon his Promise, that he would get his Attorney to put in Bail above, before the Return of the Writ, and was very thankful for the Indulgence he had shewn him: Yet he falsified his Word, and did not put in Bail before the Return of the Writ was expired. Upon which, *Varro* sued out another, and being very much provoked at his former Usage, suffered the Officer to take him into Custody upon *Change*, and oblige him to give Bail immediately. The next Term he declared against him upon the said Bond. To which the Defendant pleaded, that the same was not his Deed; whereupon, Issue was joined, and the Cause tried in *Michaelmas Term*, 1749, and a Verdict was given for the Plaintiff, for 1000*l.* But before Judgment could be entered upon against the Defendant Mr. *Churchman*, he filed his Bill in *Chancery*, in order to obtain an Injunction to stop Proceedings at Common Law;

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which was granted by that Court. Upon which, *Varro* and his Wife, immediately filed a Cross-bill in the same Court, to oblige Mr. *Churchman* to continue the Payment of the said Annuity, or to shew Reasons for his Refusal; and likewise answered his Bill against them.

ONE Thing more is to be observed in this Litigation, which shews, how highly Mr. *Churchman* resented *Varro's* Proceedings against him, is, his exhibiting Articles of the Peace in the Court of King's Bench, against both him and his Wife, in the same Term in which a Verdict was obtained against him upon the Bond. In which said Articles he insinuated, that *Varro* and his Wife had, by threatening Letters and Speeches, very much terrified him, and thereby had extorted several Sums of Money from him. But this it seems was no more than a Bugbear to frighten and harrass them; for after he had obliged them to giye in Bail to the Warrant he had obtained against them, he proceeded no farther, and at length, the Court dismissed the Complaint.

BUT Mr. *Churchman's* Revenge is not yet satis-
tiated. We have already intimated, that before
a Commission of Bankruptcy issued against Mr.
Churchman, *Melinda* had given promisory Notes
for several Sums of Money, which he had sent her
by his Friend; which Notes, had he estimated as
good and valid, for the Money borrowed upon
them, or really expected, that they would have
been taken up by the Person who gave them, he
would certainly, one would think, have given
them in as Part of his Estate and Effects, to the
Commissioners, as by the Oath which he took
on that Occasion, he was obliged to do. Yet af-
ter

Or, Intriguing Husband. 61

after his Certificate was signed, and he was quite cleared of the Commission, he gave these very Notes to the Assignees, pretending, that the Reason of his not delivering them before, was, that she was not to be found.

THE Assignees having got Possession of the Notes, took out an Action against *Melinda*, in the Name by which she signed them, before she was married to *Varro*, and held her to Bail. She might indeed, have pleaded her Coverture, but was so confident of the Goodness of her Cause, that she neglected that Advantage, chusing rather to risque a Trial upon the Merits of the Case; and for that Purpose, pleaded the general Issue, with a Note annexed, to set off several Sums of Money, which were due to her from the Plaintiff on various Occasions, to the Amount of 200*l.* The Cause was tried, and a Verdict given for the Plaintiffs. Upon which, the Defendant brought her Writ of Error; but could never, by any Means, bring the Plaintiffs to argue the Merits of it; so that it still hangs up, as a Mark for the Trial of their Skill, whenever they shall think proper to put it in Issue.

THIS, however, is very certain, that *Melinda* might have prevented these Law-suits, and that Mr. Churchman would not have made the least Scruple, to pay her the abovementioned Annuity, if she would have granted him some particular Favours, which No - body but her Husband had a Right to. For I declare, in the Face of the whole World, and appeal to his own Conscience for the Truth of it, that he has often told her, that if she would oblige him in this Kind, he would supply her with what Sums she pleased,

and

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and would redeem her Tea-kettle, and other Pieces of Plate, which she had been obliged to pledge for her Support; that he would pay her Rent, and remove her from the House where she lived, and give her Notes for *a thousand Pounds*, affirming, he was better able to provide for, and maintain her since his Bankruptcy, than before: But how great was her Astonishment, when he told her, that the Condition of his being thus kind to her was, that she must down on her Knees, and swear she would renounce her Husband; that she would never see him, or have any Concerns with him so long as she lived.

LET the World judge of the Principles of this Man; a Man who could put on the most sanctified Looks, and frame his Speech to the most pious Strains; who could recommend to her the reading of the Bible, and other good Books, and put into her Hands many such, to employ her Thoughts, and improve her Mind. But what the Ends he proposed by it were, have been already shewn. Then indeed he appeared to her an Angel of Light, and so artfully had he disguised his natural Shape, that it was impossible for her to discover his Cloven Foot, until he had got her too far in his Clutches, to disengage herself; yet she still kept such a strict Guard upon her Conduct, that, though he absolutely refused to pay any Part of her Annuity, unless she would submit to his Terms. She, however, had Resolution enough to resist all his Attempts, and would never see him alone, until after *Varro's Return from Sea.*

By the cruel and inhuman Usage of this Wolf, in Sheep's Cloathing, this painted Hypocrite, this truly carnal Christian, she and her Husband have been

driven, to suffer all the Horrors of a Prison, and to pass their melancholy Hours in a Place, where nothing but Poverty and Distress, Wretchedness and Misery, inhabit. Surrounded with Sorrows, and without Hopes of Relief, she has here published her Case, from a Persuasion, she shall find more Pity and Compassion, from the Candour and Benevolence of the Publick, than she has met from ~~any~~ one, so profuse in his Promises; and who, for eight or nine Years successively, pretended so much Tenderness and Affection for her.

HE has indeed, tried all possible Methods, except one, to suppress this Publication; because, he says, it will greatly injure his Character in the Eye of the World. But he should at the same Time, reflect on the irreparable Damage he has done *Melinda*; first, by keeping her so many Years in a State of Suspense, and then, by plagueing and harrassing her with Law-suits, to her utter and irretrievable Ruin. His only Way to prevent her from publishing her Case had been, by submitting to a very reasonable and moderate Compromise, which she very lately offered him. But as this was scornfully rejected, if his Character should suffer, by thus exposing his Actions and Principles to the World, he may thank his own Avidity, and cruel Oppression for it.

HE may perhaps insinuate to his Friends, that this is all a forged Calumny; and that she, prompted by Malice and Revenge, has invented this Story, merely to abuse and scandalize him for some pretended ill Usage. But, not to mention the undeniable Vouchers she has in her own Hands, in Support of all the Facts here advanced; this is the only Method in her Power to justify
bgr.

64 The Amorous MERCHANT:

her own Conduct, and to inform the World of her present most unhappy, and deplorable Condition, and how occasioned, in Hopes that the Generous and Benevolent may be excited to Pity, and relieve her in this wofal Distress, by promoting the Sale of her Book.

I HAVE, in the Course of the Story, cursorily took Notice of several Deeds, Bonds, and Proceedings at Law, both in Chancery, and the other Courts, but had not Room to insert them at large. I intend therefore, for the Satisfaction of Mr. Churchman and his Friends, and to gratify the Curiosity of the Publick, to publish them together in a Second Part, with Letters of her own, to him; in which, Mr. Churchman may expect to be more severely treated, than in the First; which I shall commit to the Press with all Expedition.

To prevent Piracy, she will write her own Name on every Book.

Hincipies to the Union in the express his own
should suffer, as he thought, his African and
that as this was *equally derogatory*, if the Chinese
Combination, which the *Asian* really offered him.
pa. insinuating to SISTER: he occupies his mother's
NO. 1758

